

Sterling Machine Celebrates New Building

By Kevin Johnson
Editor

ENFIELD- A decade after becoming owners of Sterling Machine, brothers Greg and Tom Caravella opened their new 33,000 square foot facility last Thursday at 4 Peerless Way in front of a throng of employees, local officials and U.S. Congressman Rob Simmons.

The Caravellas said their company- which makes aerospace products- had outgrown their previous location, a 16,000 square foot facility on Post Road which is now available for lease or sale.

"The place got very crowded. There was no elbow room, no room to work and excel at what you do," said Tom Caravella, who has been with the company for 17 years. "Our guys put their heart and soul into building this (new facility) into the way it needed to be customized in order for us to get our products out faster and better. They love it- from all the input we got- because of the room to work now. It's not cramped anymore."

Throughout Thursday's ceremony the Caravellas often described their company- which includes 45 employees- as being a close family. Greg Caravella, who has been with the company 23 years, pointed to the company's new logo- which was designed by an employee following a contest- as an example of a family atmosphere inside Sterling Machine. And it's a family the Caravellas wanted to keep together when it came time to look for a place to build.

"We didn't want to lose anybody," said Tom Caravella. "One of the

key things was to stay in the area- maybe across the river or a little south or north- but staying in Enfield made all the sense in the world because we've had so much history here."

"They made an effort to be here and we made an effort to keep them here," added Town Manager Scott Shanley, one of the guest speakers at the ceremony. "Fifty years of commitment to this community is very impressive. They could have built anywhere and they chose Enfield."

The company has been in Enfield since the mid 1950s and the Caravellas' father became a partner in the early 1970s. The new facility includes 30,000 square feet for manufacturing and 3,000 square feet of office space. Most of Sterling Machine's work is with

helicopter parts for clients such as Sikorsky. Rep. Simmons said he fights for defense contracts that help local aerospace giants such as Sikorsky and Kaman which in turn helps companies, such as Sterling Machine. But the credit, said Simmons, rests with businessmen like the Caravellas.

"The bottom line is none of it works without the courageous leadership like the Caravella brothers and their willingness to invest their time, resources and capital in the company," said Simmons, who presented the brothers with a U.S. Flag that was flown above the U.S. Capitol.

Located in a new industrial park area off Shaker Road, Sterling's neighbors include Peerless Tools

and PFI Industries, which began construction last month. It was just six months ago- on July 18- that ground was broken for Sterling's facility.

"We want to commend the Town of Enfield for putting this on the fast track," said Greg Caravella. "We had a Christmas date we wanted to start moving in and it happened."

The new facility isn't the only good news for Sterling Machine. They recently became AS9100 registered, which is an aerospace quality standard that belongs to only 400 other companies in the world. The registration was administered

by STR of Enfield.

Although there are no expansion plans currently on the table, there is room for Sterling Machine to grow if needed.

"We made preliminary plans on

the layout so we could expand 17,000 more square feet if the need ever came," said Tom Caravella. "We're hoping that happens down the road, but right now we're just settling into our new home."